

THE SHEKEL

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VOLUME XLIV

No. 1

JAN-FEB 2011

THE TIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER



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- Coin Wars: Rome vs Jerusalem
 - Most valuable medal sold
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HERITAGE



*Bar Kochba Revolt (132-135 CE).
AR sela (14.36 gm)
Undated, attributed to year 3 (134/5 CE).
Mildenberg 69 (O14/R54). TJC 267a. Hendin 711.
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*Bar Kochba Revolt (132-135 CE).
Æ 32 mm (27.23 gm).
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*Jewish War (66-70 CE)
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Year 3 (68/9 CE)
TJC 202, Hendin 662.
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*Bar Kochba Revolt (132-135 CE).
AR sela (14.12 gm)
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THE SHEKEL

VOLUME XLIV NO. 1 (CONS. NO 235)

JAN-FEB 2011

ANDREW PERALA, EDITOR

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American Israel Numismatic Association

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HUMBLE PENNY'S TRUE POWER

Pennies aren't worth much - and in fact there is talk about discontinuing production. Almost everyone throws pennies into a jar. But they add up!

Now you can do a good deed with pennies that will help an important educational institution - the Virginia Holocaust Museum, in Richmond.

Here are the recent words of Jay Ipson, Co-Founder and Executive Director of the VHM. Jay is also a Holocaust Survivor and a member of AINA.

"During WWII ... millions died at the hands of their neighbors, and the German Nazi Party. The main target was the Jews, however Jewish American POWs were not spared either, nor emigrants, Sinti and Roma Gypsies, or Political - such as Communists and Social Democrats - homosexuals and Jehovah's Witnesses.

"The numbers are staggering. How can anyone imagine six million Jews or one and a half million children? Or 17 to 20 million people? How can a student comprehend these numbers?

"For school children around the state, in order to understand the numbers in some way, we have been collecting pennies. Each penny represents a life. As of today, only 3,015,975 pennies have been collected.

"We are trying to educate the

future leaders of this wonderful country of ours. To that end, we are going to build a new exhibit on the second floor to point out genocides around the world. I invite you to be part of it."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My wife and I have gathered all the pennies we have been throwing into jars and drawers - and are sending more than 600 to Jay Ipson, Executive Director, Virginia Holocaust Museum, 2000 East Cary St., Richmond, VA 23223-7032 - and I urge all AINA members to join me in support of this important project. Please include a note with your pennies saying that you are a member of AINA.

I hope if you ever find yourself in historic Richmond that you will visit this outstanding museum. And be sure to view the exhibit of Jewish-American Hall of Fame plaques on the second floor.

Happy collecting!



CORRESPONDENCE CRITICAL; YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

COMMENTS FROM THE AINA TREASURER

Even though I am nearing the halfway point of the dues processing, and even though I have mentioned this before, there are still a large number of members who either submit their address changes long after the fact or never at all, and then wonder why they haven't received their *Shekel* in the mail, or their annual token, etc.

Please, please, if you have moved, or plan on going to your "summer" and/or "winter" home, please send your change of address to me sooner than later.

Do not anticipate that I automatically know that you have changed your address; it would be greatly appreciated.

And remember, giving an AINA membership as a gift is a great way to remember a family member or friend on behalf of their birthday, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, etc.

We have quite a number of "gifted" memberships and junior membership renewals remain at \$10.

And most important, on behalf of the Kittredge Foundation, the first year of membership for a new junior is free.

And for the information you are all waiting for, the annual AINA

membership tokens will be mailed to paid-up members beginning mid-to late-January.

Regarding my Profile series: 2011 marks the seventh year of my doing these member-stories and the favorable comments received are more than appreciated.

I encourage those to whom I have written to, but have never heard back from, to reconsider "telling your story".

Or, if you are a member whom I have not contacted yet about asking if you want your story told, please let me know (dancin.donna@yahoo.com). *Remember, everyone has a story to tell, everyone is a story.*

There is coming a point in time, and maybe even later this year, when I will have no one else to write about.

If you live in the Chicago area or plan on traveling there in August for the ANA Convention, be sure to stop by the AINA Table and plan to attend the AINA General Membership.

Remember these words? Be well, be happy ...

Donna J. Sims

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MEDALLIC ARTIST RIES: 'LIVING NATIONAL TREASURE'

By Mel Wacks

On Dec. 7, 2010, California's Alameda County Board of Supervisors honored well-known medallist artist Victor Ries by declaring the 103-year-old Bay Area sculptor "a Living National Treasure."

Ries created the unique rounded trapezoidal shape of the Jewish-American Hall of Fame medals, and designed the medals honoring Rabbi Judah L. Magnes (1969) and the Touro Synagogue (1977).

The text of the official declaration honoring Ries reads, in part:

"Whereas, Victor Ries, a long-time Berkeley resident, celebrated his 103rd birthday on October 26, 2010.

"Whereas, Victor Ries was born in Berlin, Germany and developed his unique style, rooted in the Bauhaus tradition, with a deep appreciation of fine craftsmanship and respect for materials at prestigious German art academies; he escaped the rising nightmare in Nazi Germany by emigrating to Palestine, where his work captured the attention of famed international architect Eric Mendelsohn who commissioned him to design major works, and later encouraged Victor to emigrate again, this time to Northern California where he became a founding member of the legendary Pond Farm artists' colony in the early 1940s.

"Whereas, Victor Ries made a seminal contribution to modern liturgical metal arts and crafts in America; and many synagogues in the Bay Area and elsewhere are graced by his magnificent work: the grand scale narrative window screens depicting Jewish holidays at Temple Beth Abraham in Oakland are considered to be one of the finest examples of modern Jewish synagogue art in the world; he has also created hundreds of



The Judah L. Magnes medal by Victor Ries.

smaller works - from delicate jewelry, silverware, candlesticks, silver and ebony boxes to menorahs and shield plates for Torahs in synagogues.

"Whereas Victor Ries has had one-man shows at the de Young and Legion of Honor museums in San Francisco, the Judah L. Magnes Museum in Berkeley, the Crocker Gallery in Sacramento, the Jewish Museum in New York, and - on the occasion of his 100th birthday - at the Jewish Heritage Museum at the Reutlingers Center for Jewish Living in Danville, California.

"Whereas, Victor Ries has passed on his knowledge to future generations by teaching at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, Saint Mary's College in Moraga, and the College of Marin in Kentfield; and was Artist-in-Residence at the Magnes Museum, where he created their distinctive gate and the unique shape of the Jewish-American Hall of Fame series of medals.

"Therefore, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, on December 7, 2010, does commend Victor Ries for a lifetime of artistic accomplishments shared with Alameda County residents, and express great appreciation for making the County of Alameda a better place in which to live, and extend its best wishes for continued good health in the future." □

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COIN WARS

ANCIENT ROME'S JUDAEA CAPTA COINAGE MEANT TO OVERWHELM COINS FROM JERUSALEM

BY ROBERT DEUTSCH

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN
BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY REVIEW

With hands bound behind his back, a Jewish captive stands with a second captive, a despondent woman sitting under the palm tree.

The late great Israeli numismatist Yaakov Meshorer wrote in 2001: "The Judaea Capta [coins] were minted in a quantity that is surprising for Roman coins in general, and for those celebrating victories over other peoples in particular, as if the victory over Judaea was the most important of them all. No other victory was commemorated by such a large number of coins."

Despite its minute size within the

empire, suppression of the Great Jewish Revolt of 66 to 70 C.E. required a massive Roman military force. Three Roman legions were brought into Judaea from Syria and Egypt.

The Jewish historian Josephus, who was an eye-witness to the fighting, tells us that the Roman army included the fifth, tenth and 15th legions, plus 23 annexed cohorts, as well as auxiliaries furnished by local kings such as Agrippa and the Arab Malichus, and numbered more than 60,000 soldiers.

Continued

ROME'S PROPAGANDA ON COINS

Continued

The revolt effectively ended in 70 C.E. with the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning of the Temple.

The obverse of the coin showing Jewish captives under a palm tree.

It was not simply that the Jews had revolted, however, that accounts for the large number of *Judaea Capta* coins. It is that the Jews had dared to mint their own coins during the revolt.

Minting coins was an imperial privilege. No one could issue coins without permission. Thus, striking so-called freedom coins was no less severe a transgression by the Jews than the revolt itself. The freedom coins were produced in silver and bronze. The silver coins were of high quality metal and according to high minting standards. The silver coins bear the legend "Jerusalem the Holy" and indicate their weight unit: "shekel of Israel," "half shekel" or "quarter shekel."

All the silver Jewish coins, with a single exception, display the same cultic iconography: a chalice on the obverse, and a staff with three buds of pomegranates on the reverse.

A common ancient Jewish icon,



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Top: The reverse of a Judaea Capta bronze shows a captive Jewish man standing with hands bound behind his back, and a despondent woman sitting under the palm tree. The obverse depicts emperor Vespasian.

the pomegranate with its abundance of seeds adorned the priestly robes, as described in the Bible (*Exodus* 28:33–34).

Until quite recently, the vertical

Continued

JEWISH COINS BEAR MESSAGE OF HOPE

Continued

stem of the three pomegranate buds on this coin was interpreted as just that - stem. More recently (and more likely), it is seen as a man-made staff with three buds; that is, a sacred object of the priests.

Thus the staff is likely to represent the minting authority, namely, the high priesthood of the Temple as an institution.

The freedom coins also always bear a year, indicating the year of the revolt.

Bronze coins of the second and third years carry the legend *FREE-DOM OF ZION*. This is the first time that the term "Zion" appears on a Jewish coin. In the fourth year the legend became *TO THE REDEMPTION OF ZION*.

The Jewish revolt coins are dated from year 1 to 5 to correspond with 66 to 70 C.E. Even after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., however, a group of rebels held out in the desert stronghold of Masada until 73 or 74, but no coins bear a date later than the fifth year of the revolt. The revolt coins had apparently been minted in Jerusalem, so when Jerusalem fell so did the minting of revolt coins.

The iconography on the bronze coins are emblems connected with the Jewish cult and festivals: vine



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A silver shekel from the second year of the First Revolt bears the Hebrew inscription, SHEKEL OF ISRAEL, and a chalice on the obverse. The reverse depicts three pomegranate buds atop what is now perceived to be a manmade staff - a symbol of the high Priesthood of the Temple, and thus also a symbol of the authority to mint coins. The reverse inscription reads JERUSALEM THE HOLY.

leaves and amphoras, palm trees and dates, lulavs and etrogs, a palm branch and lemon-like fruit used on

Continued

LEGENDS EVOLVE, REFLECT WAR



David Sofer Collection

A woman representing Judaea (identified by the inscription beneath her) sits dejectedly with her bound hands behind her back on the reverse of this Judaea Capta gold coin.

Continued

the festival of Sukkoth. The palm tree is of special interest because it is a symbol of Israel - and it is a symbol that the Romans adopted in their Judaea Capta coins. Judaea Capta coins were minted in gold, silver and bronze. Legends included JUDAEA CAPTA "Judaea captured" and JUDAEA DEVICTA "Judaea defeated".

The most popular images for the reverse of the Judaea Capta coins were a Jewess mourning or Jewish captives. The Jewess mourning, sometimes with her hands tied behind her back, is usually seated

under a palm tree. Occasionally a male captive with hands tied behind his back appears with the woman.

On others the captive Jew is replaced by the emperor standing, holding a spear, stepping on his enemies' helmet.

The obverse of the Judaea Capta coins features the head of the emperor, most often Vespasian, the general who was appointed by Nero to lead the Roman army in Judaea before he himself became emperor in 69 C.E.

At this point his son Titus took over and completed the victory over the Jews. A minority of the Judaea Capta coins features Titus on the obverse.

A very rare gold coin with Vespasian's head on the obverse features him on the reverse standing in a triumphal chariot with four pacing horses (a quadriga), and in front of the horses, a naked captive Jew with hands bound behind his back escorted by a Roman soldier.

We can identify this captive. It is

Continued

ROME FLOODS EMPIRE WITH COINS

Continued

Simon son of Giora, whom the Romans considered the leader of the revolt. The triumphal procession pictured on the coin is described by Josephus. Both Titus and Vespasian were “crowned with laurel” and “clad in the traditional purple robes.” The triumphal procession displayed most prominently the treasures from the Temple.

At the Forum Romanum the leader of the revolt, Simon son of Giora, having been scourged, was executed. The announcement that Simon “was no more” was met with “shouts of universal applause.”

The figure of Simon son of Giora engraved on this coin at the head of the procession is the only known image of a leader of the revolt. A close examination of the coin reveals even the features on his face. □



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of the author.*

*The Israel Museum
Naked and captive, a leader of the Jewish revolt, Simon son of Giora, is at the head
of the triumphant procession of emperor Vespasian who stands in his four-horse
chariot. A Roman soldier guards Simon. The obverse portrays Vespasian.*

THE TIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

*Long history of seafaring tradition captured
on coins of ancient Judaea and of modern Israel*

By Marvin Tameanko

*"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;
These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep."*

Psalms 107: 23-4

If we look beyond their accomplishments as monotheists, lawgivers, scholars and warriors, we would discover that the ancient Jews were also great seafarers. The lines from Psalm 107, quoted above, were probably written in King Solomon's reign, and suggest an early Jewish in-

volvement in maritime affairs and a mercantile connection to the sea. Even if we agree with some scholars that the Bible was not an historic record, the story of Noah and his ark must be the starting point for any account of early Jewish seafaring. Noah was not a Jew, but his

Continued

'BUILD IT AND PITCH IT WITHIN'



A 5-lirot coin, struck in 1963, celebrates the 15th year of Israel's founding and the long tradition of seafaring by depicting a modern ship on one side and an ancient Judaeon warship on the reverse. Struck in .900 fine silver; 34 millimeter diameter; 25 grams with .7234 oz pure silver content. Listed in Krause-Mishler's Standard Catalogue of World Coins as KM 39.

Continued

story was written by Jews who projected their own seafaring knowledge into the narrative.

In the Bible, *Genesis: 6, 14*, the Lord commands Noah to build the ark using "go-pher wood . . . and (to) pitch it within and without with pitch." This specification is recognized by modern-day shipbuilders as a method for building a ship by using a water resistant wood from Lebanon (Gopher was an ancient term for cedar or cypress), with the seams of the hull caulked with pitch (bitumen) inside as well as outside for a double water-sealant protection. Such detailed instructions could only have come from some ancient Jewish guide protocol or



book for building seaworthy vessels.

Despite its legendary status, the story of Noah and his ark implies that the Jews sailed the Mediterranean Sea at an early time in their

Continued

'LIFE AT SEA' COMMENTS IN BIBLE

Continued

history. Indeed, the Bible connects three of the 12 ancient tribes of Israel with seafaring. In the so-called "Blessing of Jacob" (*Genesis* 49:13), the tribe of Zebulun is foretold as dwelling "at the shore of the sea and shall be a shore for ships." The Song of Deborah (*Judges* 5:17), records that the tribe of Dan was "sojourning by the ships" and the tribe of Asher was "dwelling by the sea and abiding by its bays."

Admittedly, these are vague, poetic references to a maritime tradition but other statements in rabbinic commentaries on the Bible expand on them and suggest that the tribe of Zebulun specialized in sea borne commerce by trading in pearls, in the murex snails that produced the highly prized purple dye of the ancient world, in pickled fish or sauces, and in glassware. This list is a broad interpretation of the passage that states "Zebulun shall suck of the abundance of the seas (fish, pearls and snails) and the treasure hidden in the sand," (*Deuteronomy* 33:19) alluding to the glass made from seashore sand.

Furthermore, the traditional emblem of the tribe of Zebulun was a ship under sail. Perhaps all three tribes, Zebulun, Dan and Asher, participated in maritime affairs but

other references concluded that the members of the tribe of Dan were also seafaring warriors and perhaps even pirates.

Jewish historian Josephus writes in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (Book 14, Ch. 3.2), about the Roman general, Pompey the Great, accusing the Judaeans in 63 BCE of participating in piracy on the high seas. Perhaps confirming this theory, Dan's official emblem was a serpent, a frightening reptile, and an appropriate symbol for pirates who struck without warning, just like a snake. As well, the people of Asher, living close to the agricultural areas of Judaea, were known in ancient days as the maritime conveyors of produce and foodstuffs. And the emblem of the seafaring tribe of Asher was an olive tree, connecting it to food and its transport.

The Bible mentions in the book of *Genesis* that these three tribes originally were awarded land on Israel's sea shore: Dan in the area south of Jaffa, Zebulun on the central coast and Asher on the northern coast up to the Phoenician city of Zidon (Sidon) in present day Lebanon.

Later, under pressure from the Philistines who occupied the coastal plain, these tribes moved to other inland locations. But in their original coastal domains, the Jews came

Continued

RABBINIC COMMENTS NOTE LIFE AT SEA

Continued

into contact with the neighboring Phoenicians, a sea people tribally related to the Canaanites, who taught the Jews about shipbuilding, navigation, and sea trading practices. The Phoenicians also taught the Jews how to make glass and purple dye from the produce of the sea and Judaeans practiced these crafts for centuries.

In addition, the Bible tells us, in 1 Kings, 9:26-27, that King Solomon, sometime between 973 and 933 BCE, formed a partnership with the Phoenicians in sea borne commerce and shipbuilding. Hiram, the Phoenician king of Sidon, and Solomon combined their efforts in a business venture that built ships in Ezion-Gebher (Aqaba) to sail the Red Sea to Ophir, perhaps modern-day Yemen or Somalia, in search of spices and gold. These ships were probably prefabricated in several pieces in Lebanon and then carried over the desert by mules or camels to the port at Ezion-Gebher where they were assembled by Jews.

Returning from their southern voyages, these ships brought gold, precious stones, sandalwood, apes, ivory, ebony, and probably slaves to Judaea. Such trade later became one of the major sources of wealth for Jewish kings and merchants from

the 9th to 4th centuries BCE.

Eventually King Solomon, in partnership with his Phoenician friends and Egyptian allies, built a large merchant fleet that traded across the Mediterranean all the way to the Spanish city of Tartessus, (Tarshish in the Bible), and through the Red Sea to the Horn of Africa. The city of Tarshish was famous as a trade emporium located at the edge of the known world. According to the Bible (*1 Kings*, 22:48), the large Phoenician/Judaeen boats sailing to Spain were called 'Tarshish' ships.

The wealth that Solomon accumulated through maritime commerce from his Mediterranean and Red Sea ports gave rise to his proverbial reputation as one of the richest kings in the East.

Eventually, to protect this fleet from pirates and competitors, Solomon followed the policy set by the Phoenicians, and built a fleet of war ships to patrol the sea lanes.

So, historically, King Solomon can be considered as the "Father" or founder of modern Israel's merchant and military navy. In 1964 Israel minted silver and bronze medals to honor the S. S. Shalom, the passenger flagship of the state owned Zim line. The obverse of the medal shows the S. S. Shalom and

Continued

MODERN MEDALS ALSO HONOR PAST



Images courtesy Menachem Coins

A bronze medal struck in Israel in 1964, the S. S. Shalom Medal, to honor the flagship of the Zim line. The obverse depicts the S. S. Shalom. The reverse shows a ship "of Tarshish." See *The History of Modern Israel's Money, 1917-1970*, by Sylvia Haffner, M-30.

Continued

the reverse depicts a ship of Tarshish with the Hebrew legend KING SOLOMON MADE A NAVY OF SHIPS (*I Kings, 9:26*).

Solomon's merchant navy continued to sail the seas for a few centuries after his death in 933 BCE and many Judaeans profited from international maritime trade.

One merchant, Oniyahu ben Merabh, who lived around 650 BCE, must have been the owner of a large fleet. His personal seal was recently found in excavations in Israel and it shows a Tarshish-type ship above his name. The image of this ship may have been Oniyahu's company logo or trademark. Scholars say that Oniyahu is identified not by his father's name but as the son of his mother, Merabh. This is a traditional Hebrew female name



A Tarshish-type ship of Oniyahu is shown on a seal recently found in excavations in Israel. Oniyahu may have been the owner of a large fleet of ships around 650 BCE.

and the eldest daughter of the biblical King Saul was named Merabh. Also the Hebrew word "oni" means "ship" so the man's actual name may have been Oni Yahu, meaning "the ship of the Lord."

The interpretations of Oniyahu's

Continued

ANCIENT ART ON MODERN COINS

Continued

name may indicate that his family, headed by a woman name Merabh, was a powerful maritime clan that bequeathed the company through many generations, even to the female descendants. This was not unusual

in ancient Israel, especially if the women were widows who inherited the family business and acted as guardians for their young sons. A reproduction of Oniyahu's Tarshish ship appears on the modern 1-sheqel coin issued by Israel in 1985 (5745).

Jewish participation in international sea trade continued until Israel fell upon hard times in the 6th century BCE when the Edomites took back the Red Sea port of Ezion-Gebher (2 Kings 16:6). And, even more disastrously in 586 BCE, when the Babylonians conquered Israel, destroyed Jerusalem and took most of the Jewish merchants as prisoners back to Babylon. The remaining Jews in Judaea, pressed between the Edomite and the Samaritan nations, gave up control of the ports on the coastline and lost their maritime trade to the Phoe-



A powerful shipping magnate who sailed a fleet more than 2,800 years ago - Oniyahu - is honored on Israel's 1985 1-sheqel silver commemorative coin. The ship depicted on the coin's obverse appeared on a seal of Oniyahu ben Merabh shown on the Page 16. Coin listed in Krause-Mishler as KM-155; 14.4 grams of .850 fine silver for an actual silver content of .3935 oz troy.

nicians (the western Phoenicians were known as the Carthaginians), Egyptians and Greeks.

By the time Alexander the Great conquered Persia in 332 BCE the Jews had been pushed into the villages in the highlands around Jerusalem and were totally cut off from the sea. After Alexander's death, his successors Ptolemy I in Egypt (305 to 282 BCE), and Seleucus I in Syria (312 to 280 BCE), took control over Judaea and allowed the Jews to move down from the hills and resettle in coastal communities. The Judaeans had returned to sea commerce and even to ship building and ownership, but they operated out of ports in the Hellenistic countries or from harbors in Judaea under Egyptian and later Syrian control.

Egypt under the Ptolemies reigned over Judaea from 323 to

Continued

SYMBOLS ANCHOR JANNAEUS COIN



Images courtesy Classical Numismatics Group, www.cngcoins.com

A bronze prutah struck for Alexander Jannaeus sometime during his reign (103 to 76 BCE) shows the eight-rayed star that was a symbol of Judaeen royalty on the obverse and an anchor on the reverse. Ya'akov Meshorer states the anchor also symbolized the capture of Syrian port cities by Jannaeus.

Continued

198 BCE when the Syrians under the Seleucid kings took control, ruling from 198 to 168 BCE. However, in 168, the Hasmoneans (Maccabees) rebelled against Syria and by 164, had won a large measure of political and religious freedom. Alexander Jannaeus, the Maccabean king (103 to 76 BCE), continued the long struggle against the Syrians and other neighboring countries.

Early in his reign, Jannaeus gained control of port cities from Mount Carmel in the north to Egypt in the south. This brought all harbors in the area, except for Ashkelon, under Jewish control, and Jewish maritime trade began to flourish in the port cities of Athlit, Dor, Apollonia, Jaffa, Yabneh, Ashdod and Raphia. The numerous luxury items imported by sea into Judaea at that time suggested

that the population experienced an increase in wealth and prosperity.

To commemorate his restoration of these vital ports to Jewish control, Jannaeus struck coins showing an anchor on the reverses. The anchor is actually a Syrian symbol for sea power and appropriating it was perhaps an attempt by Jannaeus to insult the Seleucids who had been defeated by the Maccabean armies. (See *Ancient Jewish Coinage*, Vol. I, pages 61-62, by Ya'akov Meshorer who notes specifically on Page 62 that the anchor on Alexander Jannaeus' coins is definitely a reference to his capture of the Syrian port cities).

The obverse of the coin shows an eight-ray star, the symbol of Judaeen royalty, an emblem probably adopted from Alexander the Great and his Macedonian dynasty. The

Continued

COINS BEAR IMAGES OF WAR, TRADE

Continued

obverse inscriptions on these coins, in paleo-Hebrew letters and transliterated, was YEHO-NATAN THE KING. The reverse legend, in Greek, translates as OF KING ALEXANDER.

The Jewish involvement in seafaring during Hasmonean times in the 1st century BCE is well noted in history. Furthermore, a Maccabean-era tomb, discovered in Jerusalem in 1956, confirmed that Israel was also a military sea power at that time.

The tomb was dedicated to a man named Jason who may have been a high-ranking naval officer because dedicatory, charcoal drawings of warships had been made on the walls by the mourners. These drawings depicted the classical type of naval warship, the trireme, with a ram in the bow, and an archers' tower on the foredeck. This image was the model for the ancient ship appearing on the reverse of a coin struck in modern Israel in 1963 to commemorate the 15th year of the founding of the state, shown on the third page of this story. This modern recreation of an ancient



Photograph courtesy Deror Avi

A stone pyramid tops the reconstructed Tomb of Jason in Jerusalem. Excavated in 1956, the tomb surprised archaeologists with its ancient charcoal drawings of a famous naval warship of the time, a trireme. The drawing was adapted for the image of a trireme used on the 1963 5-lirot commemorative coin depicted on Page 14.

but highly effective, rowed warship depicts 13 sets of oars that, with the sail, propelled the ship. Also, this renowned "Seafaring" medal/coin honors the Israeli contribution to maritime affairs and features a modern ship's upper deck and smokestack on the obverse with settlements on land in the distance.

In 40 BCE, the Maccabean dynasty was supplanted by Herod the Great, a client king of the Romans, and he expanded the trade and commerce of Judaea to its maximum by taking control of the export of the spices, incense and gold arriving by caravan from Arabia and lands beyond. Some of this merchandise originated in India and was carried by ship to Yemen, then transported

Continued

HEROD GREATLY EXPANDED TRADE

Continued

overland to Judaea by the Nabateans to be distributed by Jewish ships around the Mediterranean. The commerce was so profitable that Herod built a new port city on the coast of Judaea, dedicated to Caesar Augustus and named Caesarea.

This artificial harbor, located on the coast south of Dor (near Haifa) was an engineering marvel, built using the latest Roman, construction technology. From Caesarea, Jewish merchant ships conducted business throughout the Mediterranean Sea. To advertise his great maritime accomplishments Herod the Great struck coins repeating the design of the traditional Syrian anchor used by his Maccabean predecessors but the reverse depicted a double cornucopia around a pomegranate, symbols of the prosperity achieved through commerce. The obverse Greek legend translates OF KING HEROD.

Herod's son and successor, Herod Archelaus (4 BCE to CE 6), continued Judaea's maritime trade, perhaps even increasing it to meet the taxation demands of his Roman overlords. As well, Archelaus



Images courtesy Classical Numismatics Group; www.cngcoins.com

A prutah issued during the reign of Herod the Great (40 to 4 BCE) with the Syrian anchor carried over from Maccabean coinage on the obverse. However, Herod used his own symbols for the reverse, a caduceus between double cornucopia, symbols of prosperity achieved through commerce.

inherited his father's mint and he struck coins that repeated the earlier maritime designs. But Archelaus also added a warlike reference by incorporating a warship in the design, creating a coin type which had been used only occasionally by his father. Archelaus' coin also showed two cornucopias overlapping on the obverse, indicating commercial wealth. But the warship on the reverse indicated he had the military power to protect himself and the maritime commerce that made him prosperous. This was perhaps only an idle boast because Archelaus was never militarily powerful and was deposed by the Romans in 6 CE and banished to Gaul. The coin's obverse legend OF HEROD and the reverse inscription of a Greek title ETHNARCH, or "ruler" of the nation, indicated Archelaus was not the king of the Jews. Herod the Great's kingship was not considered

Continued

ANCIENT TRADE PATTERNS LIVE TODAY

Continued

hereditary to the Judaeen authorities and, for political purposes, the Romans respected this decision.

Even when Judaea was governed totally by Roman procurators in the 1st century CE, Jews continued to participate in maritime international commerce. But stiff competition from Greek and Roman traders cut off their trade with Arabia and the East, and forced them to concentrate on exporting lower profit goods such as the local wines, fruits, grain and incense (balsam). The Judaeen ports still functioned but as time went by, the businesses in the harbors were taken over by the large Roman and Greek mercantile companies. The Jews were given only the leftovers of commerce and gradually their trade activities diminished.

Eventually, after the total defeat of the Jews by the Romans in the two wars of the First and Second revolts of 66 and 132, Jewish commercial privileges in the Empire were revoked and their maritime businesses disappeared. In response to this loss, some of the Jewish communities from the Roman inland cities in northern Palestine formed partnerships in the nearby Phoenician port cities, such as Tyre and Sidon, and they set up local depots to transship merchandise to the coastal ports. However, the Persian-Jewish Diaspora community in the Sasanian Empire (226 to 642 CE) became famous for its maritime



*Images courtesy Classical Numismatic Group; www.cngcoins.com
A bronze 2-prutot coin struck for the Ethnarch, Herod Archelaus (4 BCE to 6 CE) with a double cornucopia on the obverse and a warship on the reverse.*

trade activities. For centuries, Persian Jews traveled on their own ships from Persian ports to India and China to trade in silks, spices, gold and precious gems.

In Byzantine times, beginning in 500 CE, native Jews in Palestine were replaced by the more numerous Greek and Christian seafaring merchants while many Jews of the Diaspora continued their involvement in sea trade by using the ships of other nations. When the Muslims conquered the entire Middle East in 635, the Jews either became minor partners with Arab companies or operated as independent dealers in maritime supplies. The Diaspora Jews in the world continued to function as small-time shipping agents or suppliers for the next 13 centuries. With the birth of the modern Jewish state in 1948, Jews returned to full participation in seafaring and established a highly regarded Israeli merchant marine and a powerful military navy.

And so, a glorious seafaring tradition that began during the rule of King Solomon 30 centuries earlier was reborn in modern times. □

AUCTION HIGHLIGHT

GOLD MEDAL BREAKS RECORD

What: Only surviving 1905 gold medal honoring 250th anniversary of Jewish Settlement in the United States.

Where: Stack's

When: Fall 2010
Stack's Philadelphia
Americana Sale

Who: Sculptor Isidore Konti designed Obverse and Reverse with allegorical figures honoring Jewish settlement in U.S.



Image courtesy Stack's

One of two gold medals commissioned to honor the 250th anniversary of the first Jewish Settlement in what would become the United States - and the only known extant example - sold for a record \$69,000 in a Stack's Americana auction in the fall of 2010.

The sale price is believed to be the highest sales price for any medal honoring Jews in America.

The obverse of a 1905 gold medal commemorating the 250th anniversary of Jewish Settlement in the United States depicts the allegorical figures Standing Justice and seated Liberty on a cloud above a cowering and defeated Intolerance.

Created by sculptor Isidore Konti (1862 to 1938), the massive gold medal was struck in 1905 by the firm that would become the Medallic Art Company.

Two of the 317.2 gram, 18kt gold medals were struck in a production run that also included

Continued

MEDAL'S LEGEND FROM PSALMS



Image courtesy Stack's
 The reverse of the 250th anniversary medal depicts the allegorical figure Standing History inscribing a tablet with the dates 1655/1905. The surrounding Hebrew legend is "HaHerut Molodet Hashamayim Tzedek Umispat Machon Kisah," Freedom is Heaven-born, Justice and Righteousness are the Foundations of her Throne.

Continued

36 silver and 284 in bronze. The Deitsch Brothers firm produced the medals in their newly created medal department called the Medallion Art Company, according to catalogers for the Stack's Philadelphia Americana Sale, Sept. 30, 2010.

Authenticating literature accompanied the gold medal, including a copy of an article by AINA Board Member Dr. Ira Rezak; "A Century of Medals, and Still Counting: Anniversaries of the Jews in America," *The American Jewish Archives*, Vol. LVII, Numbers 1 & 2, 2005.

According to the Stack's catalog, one of the two gold medals was presented to President Theodore

Roosevelt, and the other to former President Grover Cleveland, by department store magnate Oscar S. Strauss.

"The anniversary celebration was directed by financier Jacob H. Schiff," the catalog states.

"Roosevelt departed from his usual custom and sent a message of support and congratulation, while Cleveland addressed the Nov. 30, 1905 celebration at New York's Carnegie Hall.

"Neither of these Gold medals remained among the effects of either President in modern times, and the research of Dr. Uriel Paul Federbush ("The First National Jewish-American Medal," *The Numismatist*, May 1976) strongly identify the present medal as the

Continued

SCULPTOR KONTI HIGHLY REGARDED

Continued

piece presented to Former President Grover Cleveland.”

The medal once owned by President Cleveland was eventually acquired by the extraordinary American collector Louis Eliasberg, and then by a “foremost American collector” who consigned the medal to the Stack’s fall 2010 auction.

Although he created a small number of medals, Isidore Konti is better known for his monumental and architectural sculptures. Konti also created smaller scale bronzes and larger friezes.

Konti was and remains highly regarded for his sculpture; New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art has several of his works in the permanent collection.

According to Stack’s, Konti “studied at Austria’s Imperial Academy in Vienna and came to the U.S. in 1892 to work with Philip Martiny at the World’s Columbian Exposition and later with fellow Austrian Karl Bitter in his New York City studio.

“He worked primarily in architectural sculpture, producing few medals. His 1907 Joseph H. Isidor Gold Medal of the National Academy of Design is still awarded.

“Most collectible (with some effort) was his 1910 *Happiness of Home and Hearth* Medal for the Circle of Friends of the Medallion.



*Sculptor
Isidore
Konti
in a 1905
photograph.*

Clearly, however, his medal honoring the 250th anniversary of Jewish settlement in America represents his finest achievement in medallion art.

The medal is 3 inches, or 76.3 millimeters in diameter and weighs 10.9993 troy ounces of 18kt gold.

The medal is listed in references as Haffner PEM-8, Baxter 305.

The obverse depicts Standing Justice and seated Liberty on a cloud towering over a defeated Intolerance, surrounded by a sans-serif Anniversary legend.

The reverse depicts Standing History inscribing a tablet with the dates 1655/1905.

The reverse legend is from *Psalms* 92:7; the transliterated Hebrew legend “Herut Molodet Hashamayim Tzedek Umispat Machon Kisah,” Freedom is Heaven-born, Justice and Righteousness are the Foundations of her Throne. □

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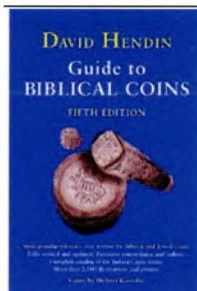
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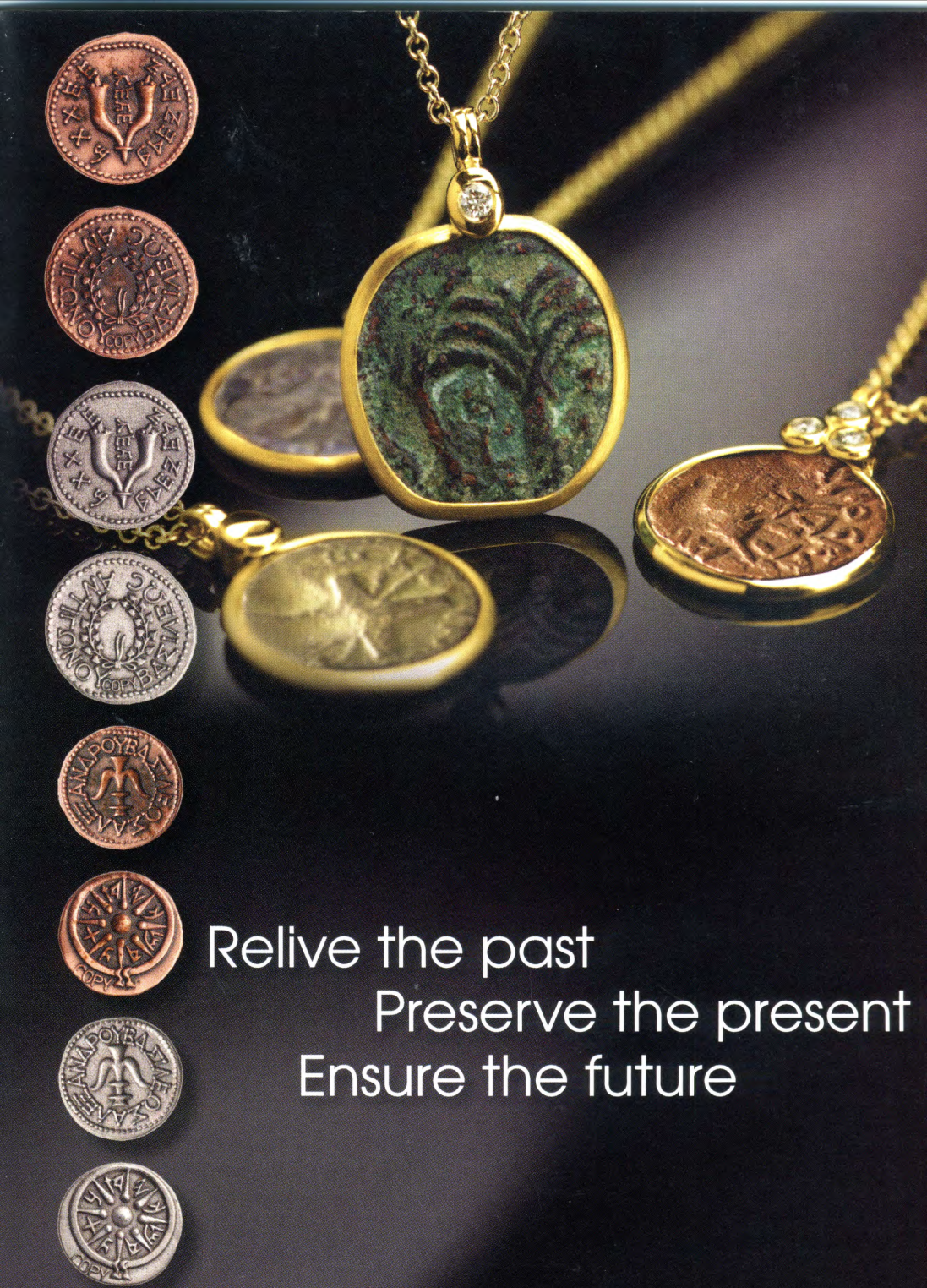
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GOLD "SHEKELS" FROM SWITZERLAND

BY MEL WACKS

A Swiss company called JWS (Joseph Wealth Systems) Wealth is currently marketing gold "quarter shekels" and "shekels" as a way to build personal wealth. They are lining up distributors who promote these items on ebay and elsewhere.

Their marketing materials indicate that these so-called coins - they are actually tokens and not coins - are non-government issued, based on the ancient 'shekel,' the world's earliest Hebrew system of weights and measures, and are available in two sizes: 1/4 shekel at 2.85 grams (just below 10th



Many companies now offer gold bullion, including a Swiss company, Joseph Wealth Systems, that bases its value on the ancient shekel.

oz), and shekel at 11.4 grams (just above 1/3 oz). Purity is indicated as .9999 fine gold.

This is another product for "gold bugs" who are advocating investing

Continued

ANCIENT THEME GRACES BULLION

Continued

in the precious metal, but is also an interesting item for collectors of Judaic numismatics.

The design depicts Joseph, in Egyptian clothing, offering a bowl of grain to people pleading for food, and the inscription:

FAMINE WAS OVER
ALL OF THE EARTH,
AND JOSEPH

OPENED ALL THE
STOREHOUSES.

Other legends indicate INSPIRATIONAL BIBLICAL HEROES," "JOSEPH CIRCA 1900-1800 B.C.," and the source of the Biblical quote: *GEN. 41:56*.

The marketing materials go on to say that "JWS's system is based on a notable Prime Minister from a significant period in Ancient Egypt. Called Joseph, this Prime Minister perceived coming economic change and carefully implemented a wealth creation strategy. Joseph's system was based on consistent, regular savings by putting Pharaoh on a seven-year strategy of AutoSave. Joseph's AutoSave plan created great wealth for himself personally



The reverse of gold bullion - struck by a private Swiss company to resemble coins - depicts Joseph in Egyptian clothing offering grain to hungry people.

and those few around him, as well as saving the nation and its people from certain disaster." ▢

WARNING: Before buying gold from anyone, you should be confident that the source is reliable and that the price - based on the weight and purity of the gold - is in-line with the current spot price of gold that you can easily check in a newspaper or on the web. The bullion trading company Kitco.com is but one source of bullion price information available on the Internet.

DATING CHANUKAH COINS

CALENDAR LESSONS FROM ISRAEL'S FIRST CHANUKAH SERIES

BY THOM CURTIS, PH.D.

Dating of modern Israeli coins has sometimes created confusion for scholars and numismatists. The government of Israel operates on the Hebrew calendar which is about 3,760 years ahead of the Gregorian calendars used in most of the west.

The Hebrew year starts in a different month than the corresponding Gregorian year so difficulty sometime arises when the dates on Israeli coins are translated.

Fifty years ago that confusion extended even to the Bank of Israel and resulted in Chanukah commemorative coins for two consecutive years being minted with the same Gregorian date, 1960.

Before describing the events surrounding the dating of these coins, a review of how the two calendars contrast may be helpful.

For example, August was the ninth month of the 2010th year of the Gregorian calendar used in



Image courtesy Rosenblum Coins

The first of two Chanukah commemorative coins issued in 1960 honors Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah and a champion of youth.

most of the Western World.

The Gregorian calendar date represents the number of years since the traditional birth of Christianity or what is now referred to officially as the Common Era (CE).

This calendar has no "Year 0" - it begins in 1 CE.

Continued

HEBREW, GREGORIAN MIX-UP

Continued

Dates prior to 1 CE are noted beginning with 1 Before Common Era (BCE). The Gregorian calendar is a solar calendar containing 365 or 366 days. It begins on January 1 and ends on December 31.

August also is also the month of Elul in the 5770th year on the Hebrew calendar used in Israel.

The Hebrew calendar is a solar-lunar (lunisolar or fixed lunar year) calendar. It also has 12 regular months plus a 13th or leap month that is added to seven out of every 19 years. Each month is 29 or 30 days long depending on the cycle of the moon.

A solar year is eleven days longer than 12 lunar months so a leap year is required about every three years to keep the calendar synchronized with the seasons.

There are two different starting points or new year's days on the Hebrew calendar.

The ecclesiastical or Biblical calendar begins on Nisan 1 as prescribed in the book of Leviticus; 1 Nisan 5770 was on March 16, 2010.

The second calendar is the civic calendar. It begins on the familiar Hebrew New Year's Day, Rosh Hashanah or 1 Tishrei which is actually the seventh month of the ecclesiastical calendar. Rosh Hashanah 5770 was on Sept. 19, 2009.

It is the civic calendar that is used to determine dates on Israeli coins.

Because of the different starting dates of the Gregorian and Hebrew calendars, the latter advances



Image courtesy Rosenblum Coins

The reverse of the 1960 Henrietta Szold-Chanukah commemorative 1-lira coin portrays the Hadassah Medical Center.

about 3½ months earlier each year.

That means that the Hebrew calendar switches from one year to the next during September of most years.

When coin dates are translated from one system to the other, it is customary to assume that they were minted during the 8½ month overlap between the two calendars. The common technique used involves subtracting 3,760 years from the Hebrew date.

To translate a coin dated 5770 into a Gregorian date; one would subtract 3,760 years resulting in 2010.

That process works fine unless the coin specifically commemorates a holiday that occurs during the three or so months between Rosh Hashanah and December 31.

Coins marking such a date are minted in the next Israeli year and

Continued

CALENDARS: SOLAR vs LUNAR

Continued

require 3,761 years to be added in order to determine the correct Gregorian date. Such is the case with coins minted to commemorate Chanukah.

Chanukah or the “Feast of the Lights” is a holiday commemorating the second century BCE rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem during the period of the Maccabean revolt.

It begins on 25 Kislev, usually between late November and late December, and is observed for eight nights.

Part of the celebration involves the nightly lighting of a Menorah or Chanukiyah, an eight-branched candelabrum.

To commemorate the 10th anniversary of statehood, the Bank of Israel decided in 1958 to issue special 1-lira coins during Chanukah.

A committee was nominated by the prime minister to select designs for the coins. The coins for that and every subsequent year were produced with both circulation and Proof finishes each year.

The first issue was minted with correct Hebrew (5719) and Gregorian (1958) dates recognizing the proper year for each calendar.

The bank issued another commemorative 1-lira coin the following Chanukah (5720). Even though that date converts to Dec. 25, 1959, the mint dated the coin as 1960.

The coin featured the jubilee or 50th anniversary of Degania, the first Jewish communal settlement in Palestine.

Whether the dating was an accident in calculation or the bank desired the math to work out cor-



Image courtesy Rosenblum Coins

The first Chanukah commemorative 1-lira coin dated 1960 honors the first Jewish collective settlement in Degania. The coin's reverse, above, features a stylized portrayal of Degania.

rectly for the jubilee celebration is uncertain.

Some researchers have speculated that the bank was late issuing the coin and so perhaps it was not released until 1960.

A third Chanukah commemorative lira was issued the following year dated 5721. It carries the correct Gregorian date for Chanukah that year, 1960.

A total of six Chanukah coins were issued between 5719 (1958) and 5724 (1963). Even though the coins were popular, the bank decided to stop minting them when it began to issue 1-lira coins for regular circulation in 1963.

It has been reported that they feared confusion among the population if there were two different designs for coins of the same denomination.

By popular demand, the Chanukah series returned a decade later,

Continued

2 COINS DATED 1960, BUT 1 IN ERR

in 5734 (1973). All other coins in the Chanukah series have the correct Gregorian year listed.

All six of the original Chanukah commemorative 1-lira coin series were struck in both Proof and Uncirculated condition.

5719/1958 "The Law is Light"

The first Chanukah commemorative 1-lira coin is dated 5719 and 1958, "The Law is Light."

The obverse and reverse were both designed by Zvi Narkiss.

The obverse features the words, "1 Israel Lira" in Hebrew above a line. Below the line are the dates in Hebrew and English and the word "Israel" in Hebrew and Arabic.

The reverse has a seven-armed Menorah between two eight-pointed stars. Below in Hebrew are the words, "TORAH OR" (the Torah is Light).

The coin is struck on a cupro-nickel planchet with a plain edge, weighs 14.2 grams with a diameter of 32 millimeters.

Both Proof and Uncirculated coins were minted at the Federal Mint in Bern, Switzerland.

There were 250,000 Uncirculated examples minted as well as 5,000 Proof examples. Unlike the other coins in this series, the Proof examples do not bear the Hebrew letter "mem."

5720/1960 "Jubilee of Degania"

The second Chanukah commemorative 1-lira coin in the series is dated 5720 and 1960, "Jubilee of Degania." This is the coin with the dating error. The coin commemorates the 50th anniversary of the initial Jewish collective settlement



Image courtesy Menachem Coins

The reverse of the first 1960 1-lira Chanukah commemorative, honoring the Jubilee of Degania, carries the date in both Hebrew and English.

in Degania.

The obverse was designed by Miriam Karoli and features the words, "1 Israel Lira" in Hebrew with the dates in both Hebrew and English and the word "Israel" in Hebrew and Arabic.

The reverse was designed by Rothschild and Lippman. It contains a stylized view of Israel's first communal settlement, Degania, set on Lake Kinneret (the Sea of Galilee) with cypress trees, palms and houses.

"Degania" is written in Hebrew at the left with "Jubilee of the Collective Settlement" in Hebrew around the rim at the top.

The coin is struck on a cupro-nickel planchet with a plain edge, weighs 14.1 grams and has a diameter of 32.2 mm. Both Proof and Uncirculated coins were minted at the Federal Mint in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Continued

CHANUKAH COINS BRIDGE MILLENIA



Images courtesy Rosenblum Coins

The first official Israeli coin to honor Chanukah, a 1-lira, was issued in 1958 - and featured the seven-branch Temple Menorah. The holiday of Chanukah celebrates the miracle of a small vial of oil that never ran out of fuel during eight nights of lighting the Menorah to mark the re-dedication of the Temple after the Maccabees victory over the Syrians.

Continued

There were 100,000 Uncirculated examples minted as well as 5,000 in Proof.

The Proof examples bear the Hebrew letter "mem" between the cypress trees on the reverse.

5721/1960

"Centenary of Henrietta Szold"

The third Chanukah commemorative 1-lira coin dated 5721 and 1960 honors the "Centenary of Henrietta Szold" and commemorates the 100th anniversary of the birth of Henrietta Szold.

Szold was instrumental in bringing medical services to Israel, and was the founder of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Movement of America as well as a leader in encouraging immigration of young people to Palestine.

Both the obverse and reverse were designed by Rothschild and Lippman.

The coin's obverse features an aerial view of the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem above the words, "1 Israel Lira" in Hebrew.

The dates are written in both Hebrew and English and the word "Israel" is written in Hebrew and Arabic.

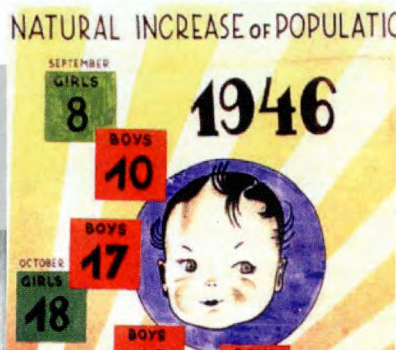
The reverse contains a stylized figure of a cloaked female shepherd holding a lamb.

Above the figure are the words "Henrietta Szold," the commemorative dates "5621-5721" and "Hadassah - Youth Aliya" (Youth Immigration) in Hebrew.

It is made of cupronickel with a plain edge. It weighs 14.1 grams and has a diameter of 32.2 mm.

With just 17,000 Uncirculated coins struck as well as 3,000 in Proof coins struck (in the Federal mint in Utrecht, the Netherlands), the Szold coin is the key to the Chanukah series. □

FROM TO TERROR *TRIUMPH*



BY
**SIMCHA
KURITZKY**

PART IV CONCLUSION

From the earliest struggles more than two millenia ago, the goal of founding a secure nation state is finally achieved.

In June 1933, Germany passed a law to permit marks to be exported, but the amount that could be exported was rationed based on the strength of the central bank.

Conversion-money notes were issued to foreign creditors as claims on those rationed marks.

The marks deposited by fleeing Jews were classified as foreign deposits by the Transfer Agreement, and should have resulted in the issuance of conversion money.

It is not known how many of these special marks were actually redeemed.

Sometimes the German Gold Discount Bank would buy up the conversion marks at half of face value.

Continued

RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON MARKS



To manage export restrictions, Konversionkasse (conversion money) notes were issued. dated August 28, 1933, is a 10-mark note overstamped with 1934.

Continued

Holders could also use them to buy German goods or sell them to tourists to use in Germany.

This scheme succeeded in keeping Germany solvent at the depths of the Great Depression, though at the expense of exiles and foreigners.

ARAB REVOLT

The rise of fascism in Europe and financial assistance from Nazi Germany encouraged the Arabs to attack both Jews and the British in the Holy Land from 1936 to 1939.

Having little success against the fortified Jewish towns and villages, the Arabs attacked mostly civilians on the road and economic targets, such as crops and forests.

The British retaliated by allowing the formation of the Jewish Settlement Police, an armed force that included several members of the Hagana.

The British also ordered a strict limit on Jewish immigration to the Jewish homeland in 1939, just

when a refuge was most urgently needed for millions of endangered Jews.

This was an attempt to appease the Arabs, but the restrictions backfired, and emboldened Arab attackers.

Fierce resistance riots broke out which ended months later, only after outbreak of World War II and the French capture of rebel leaders in Damascus, Syria.

A voluntary sales tax, known as *kofer hayishuv*, was imposed by the Zionist Organization to pay for defense.

Even though the Palestine Currency Board provided coins as small as 1 mil (one-half cent U.S.), smaller denominations were needed for the tax, which started at a half mil.

The Hagana issued coupons in a variety of denominations, and one metal token, shown here.

At the top is the legend “*kofer hayishuv*” - “ransom of the community.” Below is ½ mil and “son of tax stamp”. In the center is a plain

Continued

PRE-WWII TAX TOKEN 1ST COIN?

Continued

shield which divides the Jewish date 5699.

The 18mm brass tokens are uniface bracteates. About half a million tokens were made at the Pliz Metal Works in Holon, outside of Tel Aviv, in late 1938, using three hand-made dies.

These pieces circulated as coinage until they were redeemed by the State of Israel in the 1950s, making them the first Jewish coins in the Holy Land since the Bar Kochba Revolt was put down in 135 CE.

DISCRIMINATION AND GENOCIDE

Most German Jews were willing to wait out the Nazis, but changed their minds after Kristallnacht (the Night of Broken Glass), Nov. 9 to 10, 1938, when German agents attacked Jews and their property, and set fire to almost every synagogue in the Reich.

Germany had half a million Jews in 1933, a third of a million just before Kristallnacht, and practically all attempted to leave immediately after the brutal night of violence and arson. But fewer than 100,000 succeeded.

After Germany invaded and annexed half of Poland in late 1939, there were more than a million Polish Jews held captive, and no country was willing to take them in.

The Nazis then took another chapter from late medieval history and built crowded ghettos to house Poland's Jews.

In each ghetto, the Nazis created a puppet government, following the form but not the substance of Jewish autonomy established centuries



A Hagana-issued metal tax token from 1938, in the amount of one-half mil, were redeemable with the State of Israel until the 1950s, making the uniface bracteates the first Jewish coin to be struck in the Holy Land since the Bar Kochba coinage circa 135 C.E.

earlier.

In late 1941, Germany seized the rest of Poland and then invaded the Soviet Union.

With millions more Jews captive and Germany's allies anxious to get rid of their own Jews, the Germans decided that starvation and disease in the ghettos was not eliminating Jews fast enough.

The Nazis embarked on a campaign of genocide with bullets, forced labor, and ultimately poison gas.

The Nazis were eagerly assisted by Judeophobes from the Hungarian, Pole, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Vichy French, Dutch and other populations.

By 1945, nearly six million Jews were dead, with only ashes were left of previously vibrant Jewish communities of central and eastern Europe.

Extraordinary currency, though, was produced by prisoners of the

Continued

DESPITE GENOCIDE, HOPE SURVIVES

Continued

Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1943.

This camp was described by the Nazis as a rest home for privileged Jews, but in fact, the inmates slowly starved or died of disease in cramped quarters. Most died or were shipped to death camps in Poland.

Of the 144,000 Jews who entered Theresienstadt, fewer than 20,000 survived the war.

The notes were given to inmates in exchange for confiscated goods and currency (at an exchange rate of 10 crowns per reichsmark).

Theresienstadt notes are remarkable for their detailed designs and color. The notes also carry a message of hope. The notes show Moses holding the Ten Commandments in Hebrew, and are issued in the name of the "Jewish Elder" Jakob Edelstein.

Shown above are the front and back of the 100 kronen note. In a strangely ironic twist, attempts by the Nazis to get inmates to use the notes failed when the Nazis refused to provide anything for the Jews to buy with them.

TYPE TWO IMMIGRATION
After the war, about 100,000



Images courtesy Israel Museum Collection

The beautiful notes designed by resident artists in the Theresienstadt concentration camp conveyed a message of hope when camp commanders failed to ban the image of Moses, likely because they did not recognize the importance of the Prophet who delivered his people to the Promised Land.

Jews were liberated from the death and slave labor camps, only to be imprisoned again by the Allies who renamed them Displaced Persons (DP) camps.

As other Jews attempted to return home, their neighbors attacked them, and so they fled to the Displaced Persons camps, adding 150,000 more refugees in 1946 and 1947.

At first, Allied armies and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration ran the camps.

But by late 1945, Jewish relief organizations were allowed to bring a semblance of normalized life

Continued

BABY BOOM FOLLOWS WWII

Continued

there, providing medical care and schools for children.

The Jews were among a million non-repatriable refugees, which also included gentiles from eastern Europe who were anti-Communist.

There was a baby boom in the camps when Jews, for whom procreation had been banned under the Nazis, made up for lost time.

Few countries were willing to take in Jewish refugees; the U.S. eventually absorbed 80,000.

Many Jews tried to get to Palestine illegally, were apprehended by the British, and placed in prison camps in Cyprus.

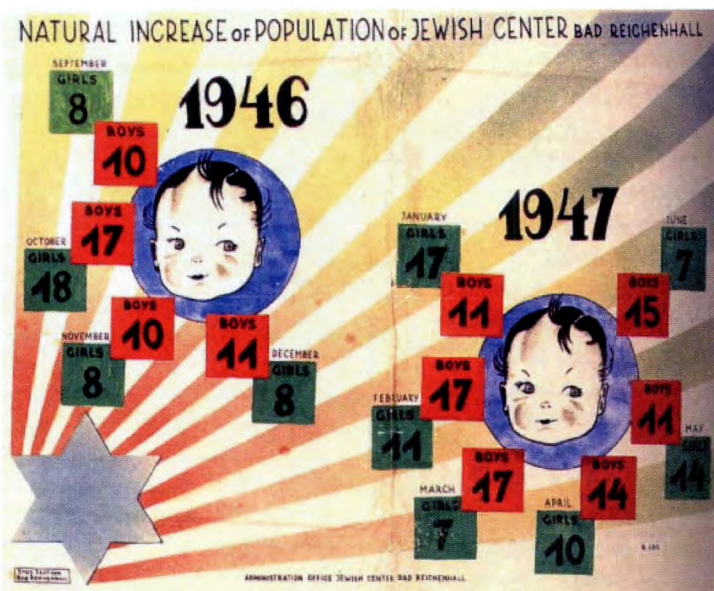
While the Revisionists had facilitated Jewish immigration in contravention of the Mandate's orders since 1934, the Jewish Agency didn't join them until late 1938.

Jews referred to this illegal immigration as *Aliya Bet*, or Type Two immigration.

During and after World War II, more than 100,000 Jews came to the Land of Israel in excess of the British quota (which was 18,000 per year in the mid-1940s).

The last camp finally closed in 1952.

Above, a 1946 poster from the



A 1946 poster from the Reichenhall Displaced Persons camp portrays the camp's baby boom, which was but part of a larger flourishing of new life following the restrictions and ravages of World War II.

Reichenhall Displaced Persons camp depicts the local expression of a wider phenomena: a post-war baby boom.

Jews in the Displaced Persons camps no longer had to fear the horrors of the concentration camps, but they were still inmates.

To distribute food, ration cards were issued by the American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) for the Jewish Displaced Persons camp in the town of Kissingen.

Bad Kissingen is a town in north-west Bavaria, close to Fulda. The AJDC was founded during World War I to provide food to starving Jews in the Land of Israel.

It soon spread its mission to endangered Jewish communities in war-torn eastern Europe.

During World War II, the AJDC assisted Jews fleeing the Nazis, and

Continued

YET AFTER WWII, MANY IN CAMPS

Continued

provided food and funds to Jews living under the Third Reich.

After the war, the AJDC helped run the Jewish DP camps, transport Jews to Palestine and other countries of refuge, and provided food, medical care, and vocational training to half of Europe's surviving Jews.

The ration card shown here was good for one week's worth of lunches (Mittagesen) and dinners (Abendessen), but hadn't been used before the camp closed. It is rare and uncatalogued.



A rare, uncatalogued ration card from the Bad Kissengen Displaced Persons camp was good for one week's worth of lunches and one week's worth of dinners, but had not been used.

END OF THE MANDATE

One of the first issues to confront the newly-formed United Nations was what to do with the hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees who had no homeland of their own.

Most of the world closed their doors to them. Several countries, such as Romania, which had not allowed the Germans to wipe out their Jews, were still anxious to expel them.

On Nov. 29, 1947, the United Nations passed Resolution 181 which called for an independent Jewish state in Palestine.

All 10 Muslim member states plus Cuba, Greece, and India voted against it, but 33 states voted for the resolution, and 10 abstained.

Resolution 181 also called for an independent Arab state and an inter-

national zone around Jerusalem and Bethlehem, but the Arabs rejected it. King Abdullah of Transjordan claimed all of Palestine as his own.

The British announced they would not implement the resolution and would instead withdraw from their Mandate the following May, which they did.

In the meantime, the British handed over strategic sites to the Arabs and began withdrawing all Palestine notes and coins (the entire issue of 1947 dated coins was melted down with only a trivial number surviving), to place the Jews in as disadvantageous a position as possible.

Many British soldiers deserted to fight either on the side of the Arabs or the Jews.

In January 1948, the currency shortage caused the Jewish Agency to seek production of its own notes.

At the time, there was no agreement on what the new Jewish state would be called, and security print-

Continued

NOTES READY FOR NEW NATION

Continued

ing firms were not willing to issue notes in the name of a country that did not yet exist.

So the Jewish Agency authorized the Anglo-Palestine Bank to negotiate a contract with the American Bank Note Company (ABNC) of New York (whose name does not appear on their notes since they considered this a rushed job of inferior quality).

A set of very plain currency notes were also printed in Israel in case the ABNC contract fell through, but almost all of those notes were destroyed.

Given the short time frame, the ABNC notes consist only of guilloches from Chinese banknotes and text.

Printing started in April, they were delivered to Israel after independence in July, and became legal tender on August 16, 1948.

Notes were issued in 500 mils, 1, 5, 10, and 50 Palestine pound denominations (in Hebrew, the name is Land of Israel pounds).

The note shown here measures 150 x 78 mm and is denominated for 5 pounds. The English inscription appears on both sides, while the serial numbers appear only on



Notes for the impending State of Israel's declaration of sovereignty were authorized, designed and printed in six months and became legal tender on Aug. 16, 1948. Shown here is a Five pound note.

the Hebrew side.

The names of the bank officials, S. Hoofien and A. Barth, are printed in English and Arabic, but appear as cursive signatures in Hebrew.

Otherwise, the English, Hebrew, and Arabic inscriptions are identical. In 1951, the Anglo-Palestine Bank, a British corporation, was merged with the Bank Leumi Le-Israel National Bank of Israel, an Israel corporation.

The Anglo-Palestine Bank notes were replaced with very similar-looking Bank Leumi notes in 1952.

In 1954, the Government formed the Bank of Israel, which has issued all notes since then.

Continued

NATION'S BIRTH SPAWNS WAR

Continued

The British Mandate ended on May 15, 1948, on the Jewish Sabbath.

The Jewish Agency had announced the formation of the independent State of Israel late the previous day, May 14.

However, the Arabs didn't wait that long to start their attacks, which began in earnest soon after U. N. Resolution 181 passed.

The armies of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and Transjordan invaded in force after May 15, with British support.

Israel lost considerable territory at first (including the Old City of Jerusalem), and many observers assumed the new state would lose, but the Jews turned the tide after the first cease fire ended in July 1948.

Although Jews started out with only light arms, they were able to buy better weapons from the Czechs and French, who were anxious to reduce British influence in the Middle East.

More than 10,000 Jewish refugees arrived from Europe each month, allowing the Israel Army to expand during the war.

The Hagana was reorganized as the Israel Defense Force (IDF), and the Revisionist army was forcibly integrated into the IDF in May.

Separate armistices were signed with each invading army from



On May 15, 1948, David Ben Gurion, standing beneath a portrait of Theodore Herzl, officially proclaims the existence of the new State of Israel.

February through July 1949 (except for Iraq, which has yet to accept a cease fire in the war against Israel).

Israel ended up with more territory than the rejected partition plan of 1947 envisioned.

But the Egyptian army controlled Gaza, Syria held the east bank of Lake Kinneret, and Transjordan soon annexed the heartland of Judaea, Samaria and the Old City of Jerusalem, renaming it the West Bank.

On March 10, 1949, the Provisional Government of Israel was replaced by one elected by the entire populace, Jewish and Arab.

For its first official coinage as an independent sovereign government in Holy Land in more than 2,000 years, the State of Israel used designs from ancient coinage on aluminum 25-mil coins dated 5708 and 5709.

Israel solicited ideas from the Israel Numismatic Society, which recommended using designs from ancient coins in July 1948.

The two 30mm 25-mil coins

Continued

25 MILS 1ST COIN IN 2,000 YEARS

Continued

shown here portray a cluster of grapes from an ancient Bar Kochba silver denarius, surrounded by an olive wreath based on ancient Hasmonean copper coins.

The name Israel appears in Hebrew and Arabic around the grapes, and the wreath encompasses the denomination in Hebrew and Arabic. The date is in Hebrew only.

The coin on the right is one of 42,650 minted by the Zaltman cutlery factory in Jerusalem in 1948.

They are the only Jewish coins dated 5708 (September 15, 1947 - October 4, 1948 C.E.).

These coins were not released into circulation based on some claims of low quality.

It is the author's opinion that the primary reason for minting coins was that, should Israel have lost the war, the coins would have been one of the few tangible remnants of the Third Jewish Commonwealth, just as the shekels and selas are for the provisional governments of the First and Second Revolts against Rome two millennia ago.

In April 1949, delays in the coin shipments from a private firm in England caused the Israel Government to mint 650,000 new 25 mils with the same design but dated 5709, this time struck by Mechsav Ltd. in Holon (near Tel Aviv).

The coin on the left is one of these latter strikes. The strike is sharper, stronger and the metal of a



The first coins struck for the State of Israel are of two types: at right, the first, rushed into production in 1947, carries the date 5708. The second, struck in 1948, carries the date 5709.

higher quality.

Both types were released into circulation, though they were demonetized in September 1950.

The regular issue 25 prutot coin that replaced the 25 mils has the same basic design, but is struck on a smaller cupronickel planchet.

CONCLUSION

The modern world was built by industrialization, urbanization, and nationalism.

Jews were, for the first time, made full citizens of modern states, which also placed increasing pressure on them to give up their culture, language, and religion.

However, hatred of the Jews also modernized, and the last two centuries have seen discrimination against even assimilated Jews, to the extreme of mass murder, making an independent Jewish state a necessity.

That state could only be founded in the Jewish ancestral home, Israel.

But two centuries ago, the Jewish community of the Land of Israel was too small and impoverished to accomplish so great a task.

Continued

NATION BUILT OVER MANY YEARS

Continued

It took decades of intensive investment: to build a growing and self-sustaining Jewish community in the Holy Land; to create the infrastructure of a state within a state, and finally to assert sovereign independence with the requisite financial and military obligations necessary for governance.

Thus, the political, economic, and military facets of the Jewish state all had their origins decades before Israel's birth, as documented in this series of articles for *The Shekel*.

It was only upon this foundation that the modern Jewish state could be built, which today has six million citizens and is the only consistently democratic state in the entire region. ☐

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The selection of Moses for the Theresienstadt notes was a deliberate move - and message - by camp artist Petr Kien. Judaism's greatest Prophet took his people to the Promised Land. Jews would again find the way after the horrors of WWII - that was Kien's message. Kien died at Auschwitz.

GREAT APPEAL

KINDERGARTEN TOKENS ASKED FOR SUPPORT



Images courtesy Steve Kaplan

A young girl is the central image on a token used to raise funds for the Hebrew Kindergarten & Infant House in New York City. The token's reverse, at right, stresses mutual benefits to be gained by helping the helpless. This token likely was struck in 1923. All three tokens depicted in this article are of bronze and are 30.5 millimeters in diameter.



BY STEVEN H. KAPLAN

The Hebrew Kindergarten & Infants Home is of interest to numismatists due to its issuance of three different contribution/fund-raising tokens in the 1920s through perhaps the early 1940s.

The actual dates of the issuance of these tokens is tentative, and the fund drives for which they were issued range from the uncertain to the unknown.

But the history of the organiza-

tion is fairly well documented, and the locations of the two homes are known.

History of the Organization

Founded as the Hebrew Kindergarten and Day Nursery Association, the organization operated "in a small way" when it first opened at 29 Montgomery Street, according to an article in *The New York*

Continued

SHELTERS BUILT IN MANHATTAN, QUEENS

Continued

Times on May 26, 1913.

The kindergarten and home was established in Manhattan's Lower East Side in either 1905 or 1908, and then, when it could no longer accommodate the number of children left in its care, moved up the block in 1914 to the 35 and 37 Montgomery Street address. Before the move, the facility was able to care for 150 children.

As is implied by its original name, the organization initially provided day care for preschooler and kindergarten-age children.

All were the children of widows or of women whose husbands were unable or unwilling to work.

The organization employed four kindergarten teachers and also employed maids, who bathed each child every morning, and provided breakfast, lunch and a snack of bread and milk at 3:00 p.m. Two auxiliary organizations provided shoes and clothing for those in need.

All services were free of charge.

Plans were filed in March 1912 for a new three-story building at 35 and 37 Montgomery Street, with an estimated cost \$25,000.

But by April 1913, when the lots were purchased, the estimated cost had increased to \$60,000.

The cornerstone for the building was laid on May 25, 1913 by Joseph Marcus, president of the People's Bank, who paid \$700 (in addition to making a \$500 donation) for the privilege.

On that date, Judge Otto A. Rosalsky, followed by Judge Leonard A. Snitkin, "caused something



The second token in the series of three is believed to have been issued after 1923; the actual date of issue is uncertain. The central device on the token's obverse is a portrait bust of a young boy. The heart-shaped wreath is repeated on both obverse and reverse of the Manhattan home token.

like a riot" according to *The Times* when they left the grandstand and walked through the crowd of 3,000 people, collecting money.

"The crowd surged about, and people literally fought to reach the Judge[s] with donations. From the windows of tenement houses in the neighborhood coins wrapped

Continued

TOKENS ESSENTIAL FUND-RAISING TOOL



Believed to be the rarest of the three token issues, and the last in the series, the Far Rockaway token was issued to raise funds for the new Queens branch home for children. In this issue, though, the portrait of the youth on the obverse is more abstract than on the previous two issues for the Manhattan home. In this issue, the portrait is an outline only; and the obverse wreath, while still heart-shaped, also is in outline.

Continued

in paper were thrown," The Times article noted.

Eventually the crowd became so excited that the judges were forced to call upon the police, who fought their way through the crowd and escorted the shaken jurists back to the grandstand.

The two men collected \$276 in additional donations.

The new building, which could accommodate up to 500 children, was dedicated on May 24, 1914.

At that time, roughly two-thirds of the building's costs remained to be raised.

In response to the global influenza epidemic of 1918, the organization opened a special ward with trained nurses to care for children whose mothers were ill with influenza.

And significantly, the organization began caring for children whose mothers had died in the epidemic, according to a Nov. 9, 1918 article in *The New York Times*.



By mid-1918 the organization was called the Hebrew Kindergarten, Day and Night Nursery, and under this name it was formally registered with the New York State Department of State in April 1921.

In August 1919, a fund drive began to raise \$50,000 for an "infant home" according to The Times.

Another fund drive, to raise \$100,000 for the completion of its new building in Far Rockaway, began in November 1923.

By then, the organization was apparently operating under the name Hebrew Kindergarten &

Continued

ISSUE DATES OF TOKENS UNCERTAIN

Continued

Infants Home (and was mistakenly called the Hebrew Kindergarten & Orphan Home by *The New York Times* in a Nov. 25, 1923 article). The home was formally registered with the New York State Department of State in 1925.

The organization had been operating a summer home in Far Rockaway, but that building had been condemned by the Fire Department.

Few published references to the organization appear until 1935, when it was reported to be operating an infant's home at Central and Plainview Avenues, in Far Rockaway in Queens.

Later, there are specific references to its address in Far Rockaway as 310 Central Avenue, and later still, as 310 Beach 20th Street.

Since Beach 20th Street becomes Central Avenue, and since Plainview Avenue intersects with Beach 20th Street, but does not intersect with Central Avenue, it would appear that these references are all to the same building.

The organization continues to operate at Beach 20th Street, albeit now as a nonsectarian early childhood day-care center.

The last known published reference to the kindergarten and day

nursery at the old address of 35-37 Montgomery Street dates back to 1944.

The Tokens

All three of the bronze contribution/fund raising tokens issued by the Hebrew Kindergarten & Infants Home are 30.5 millimeters in diameter. They all share identical obverse and reverse legends; only the devices on the tokens differ.

The obverse of the most common of the three tokens (*on Title Page*) is depicted in *Coins Reveal: The Samuel and Daniel M. Friedenberg Collection of Coins*

and *Medals*, by Yakov Meshorer and Ira Rezak (published by The Jewish Museum in 1983), as coin number 144.

The two less common tokens (*Image Sets Two and Three*) are similar to one another.

The obverse device on each is the bust of a boy facing front within a heart-shaped wreath.

They differ from each other principally in the central design. In the less common token, (*on Opposite Page*), the boy is a mere outline, and the laurel leaves of which the wreath is comprised are likewise outlined and not solid.

The reverses of both are identi-

***'All of the children
receiving care at
the home were from
families with no
wage earner.
All services were
free of charge.'***

Continued

OFFICIAL NAMES OF HOME KEY CLUES

Continued

cal to one-another. They differ from the reverse of the first type only in that the laurel leaves of the wreath are outlined and not fully formed.

Given the name of the organization appearing on the tokens, they could not have been issued much before 1923.

It is highly probable that at least one of them was issued in connection with the 1923 fund drive to raise \$100,000 needed to complete the new Far Rockaway building.

The token with the girl standing in supplication (*on Title Page*) is by far the most common of the three types.

It is quite possible that this token is the one most likely to have been issued in connection with the major fund drive of 1923.

While it is possible that one or both of the other two token types were also issued in connection with that fund drive, it is very likely that they were issued in connection with subsequent fund drives with lesser fund-raising



Photograph courtesy Liebman Library

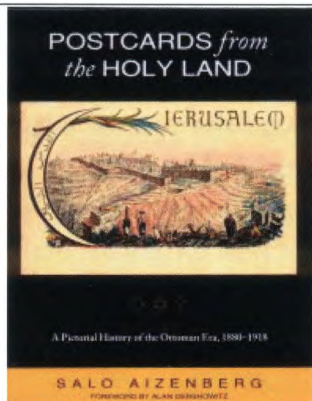
An undated photo of the Hebrew Infants Home in Far Rockaway, Queens Borough, New York City, on an idyllic summer day gives a sense of the family-style environment that children experienced at the home.

goals.

The dates of those additional drives are not known with certainty, and could have occurred at any time up to the closing of the Montgomery Street location in the early 1940s. ▢

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Back issues of *The New York Times* are the principal source of historical information used in the preparation of this article. Other sources include the *American Jewish Yearbook*, and the records of the New York State Department of State.



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The Society of Israel Philatelists is a nonsectarian cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collecting of all philatelic items related to the Holy Land.

The journal, **The Israel Philatelist**, is published 6 times a year.

www.israelstamps.com

ISRAEL GOLD COLLECTOR, LONGTIME AINA SUPPORTER: ALLAN COHEN

Written by Donna J. Sims, NLG

Allan Cohen was born and raised in The Bronx, New York, where he attended Taft High School. Raised as a Sephardic Jew, Allan's grandparents were born in both Turkey and Greece. Following graduation from high school in 1966, Allan moved to Jacksonville, Florida where he attended Jacksonville University, graduating in 1970 with a major in accounting. After graduation, Allen served in the Florida National Guard. Finishing his military commitment, Allen continued his education by earning and receiving his CPA certification in 1973. Allen and his wife Kathy have been married since 1973 and have two children, Joseph 33, a jazz musician in San Francisco, and Crista 26, Director of Teen Services in the Charlotte, N.C., Levine Jewish Center.

In 1978, Allen began practicing as a CPA specializing in gift and estate taxation and later started the CPA firm of Harper & Cohen. Changing professions in 1983, Allen became a certified financial planner (CFP) and money



Allan Cohen

PROFILE

manager. In 1995, Allen formed the firm of Butensky & Cohen Financial Security, Inc., which manages assets for individuals and companies. In addition to a very busy business life, Allen has served two terms, a total of four years, as treasurer of Beth El The Beaches Synagogue in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fl., where he and Kathy still reside.

It was around the year of 1985 that Allen decided he wanted to invest in gold coins. It didn't take long for him to realize that it would be too expensive and nearly impossible to collect every

Continued

ISRAEL GOLD MYSTERY AT FIRST TO DEDICATED COLLECTOR COHEN

gold coin the U.S. has minted, so he changed his direction to gold coins of Israel following the suggestion of a local coin dealer. At the time, Allen had no idea that Israel had ever minted any gold coins. It was during this "collecting transition period" that Allen met the late J. J. Van Grover.

Thanks to all of J. J.'s knowledge of Israel gold and everything else, Allen not only began his collection of Israel gold and silver, but he also gained knowledge of the history behind the issuance of the coins and gained great insight into the meaning of the designs.

In Allen's own words, buying and learning made the collecting hobby much more interesting and satisfying. Today, Allen is very proud to own a complete set of all the gold coins the State of Israel has minted.

Through the years, Allen has introduced his beloved hobby to many other people, including giving a slide presentation to students at his synagogue's Hebrew School. He was able to obtain back issues of *The Shekel* along with medals received from

AINA, to distribute to the students.

"Just seeing the look on their faces when I went through my slide presentation and then showed them my collection was well worth the time spent on all the planning." He was able to answer their many questions and believes they left his seminar with a far greater interest in becoming numismatists themselves and collecting Israel coins. Allen has also presented his collection to his Havorah, (a group of Jewish families who have been meeting and celebrating simchas for many years together). They all seemed to be fascinated with his collection and one member later contacted Allen about his starting to build a complete set of Israel coins for himself.

Through the years, Allen has shown family and friends copies of his Shekel collection and is proud to say that a few have even become AINA members in order to receive *The Shekel* for themselves. He states that it is fun and enjoyable to read and learn about other AINA collectors and he tries to promote AINA at every opportunity. ☺

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